

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 18 July 2017 commencing at 4:30 pm

Present:

Chair
Vice Chair

Councillor P W Awford
Councillor R E Allen

and Councillors:

K J Cromwell, Mrs J E Day, D T Foyle, Mrs P A Godwin, Mrs R M Hatton, Mrs H C McLain, T A Spencer, Mrs P E Stokes, P D Surman, H A E Turbyfield and M J Williams

also present:

Councillors Mrs G F Blackwell and R E Garnham

OS.15 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 15.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.
- 15.2 The Chair welcomed Sarah Scott, Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council, to the meeting and indicated that she would be giving a presentation on the annual public health report at Agenda Item 9. Councillor R E Garnham, the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, was in attendance and would be providing an update at Agenda Item 7. It was noted that Councillor Mrs G F Blackwell, Lead Member for Organisational Development – which included scrutiny - was also present as an observer.

OS.16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- 16.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G J Bocking and M G Sztymiak. There were no substitutions for the meeting.

OS.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 17.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 17.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

OS.18 MINUTES

- 18.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2017, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.19 CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 19.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages

No. 15-19. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the plan.

19.2 It was

RESOLVED That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.20 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

20.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2017/18, circulated at Pages No. 20-27, which Members were asked to consider.

20.2 The Head of Corporate Services recognised there were a number of pending items contained within the plan and he provided assurance that these would come forward during the course of the financial year. He made particular reference to the Tewkesbury Borough News Review Working Group which would shortly be coming to a conclusion and indicated that the report would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on 5 September 2017. It was subsequently

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2017/18 be **NOTED**.

OS.21 GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

21.1 Members received an update from Councillor Rob Garnham, the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, on matters discussed at the last meeting of the Panel held on 14 July 2017.

21.2 Councillor Garnham advised that this was the first meeting following the May local elections and, as well as a change in membership from some District and County Councils, a new Chair and Vice Chair had been elected; Gloucestershire County Councillor Will Windsor-Clive and Cheltenham Borough Councillor Colin Hay respectively. For the benefit of the new Panel Members, a presentation had been given on the role of the Police and Crime Panel. In terms of the Chief Executive's report, crime statistics had been reported from the www.police.uk website which had shown that crime levels in Gloucestershire were classed as 'normal' when assessed against peer forces. As regards the direction of crime, i.e. crime taken over two periods of 12 months, Gloucestershire was rated as 17 out of 41 forces, excluding City of London. In respect of delivery, i.e. crimes per 1,000 population, Gloucestershire was rated as 11 out of 41 forces, excluding City of London; the lower the number in both categories the better. In terms of the emergency services collaboration, the Panel had been advised that external consultants were still reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of the Fire Service being taken under the control of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The report had also noted that Detective Sergeant Nigel Hatten had been awarded the Queen's Police Medal for his work in protecting children in Gloucestershire and his tireless dedication to victims of sexual abuse.

21.3 Members were advised that the hard-hitting report in relation to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) national child protection inspection for Gloucestershire had provoked most discussion from the Panel. The Police and Crime Commissioner had been keen to point out the seriousness of the review and acknowledge the findings of HMIC. The inspection had identified areas of significant concern and a number of recommendations had been made as a result. Reference was made to Gloucestershire County Council's inspection of children's services which had also raised serious concerns. The Constabulary was required to produce a report within six weeks - due around the end of July - which would be followed by a re-inspection in October. The Police and Crime Commissioner had stated that he aimed to hold a summit conference of all relevant parties so that

failings in child protection could be discussed across the board and addressed in a non-political and collaborative manner. Councillor Garnham indicated that it was a lengthy report and a number of the cases were extremely worrying. Whilst the good work of frontline Officers was acknowledged, the Panel had picked up on the statement from HMIC that “we found limited strategic oversight by senior leaders and lack of effective supervision of child protection investigations” and reassurance was sought from the Police and Crime Commissioner that the leaders of the Constabulary were prepared to address the concerns highlighted. The Police and Crime Commissioner had explained that there was a new top team in place and that he had had several one to one meetings with the Chief Constable, where the report had been discussed in full. The Police and Crime Commissioner was “confident that the Police will get a much more favourable report in three to six months time”. It was noted that only four forces had been subject to inspection and all had been found wanting.

- 21.4 The Panel had also received a presentation regarding the Commissioner's fund which had seen an increase in bids for funding. Councillor Garnham explained that £1.2M was available annually; £600,000 had been awarded so far this year and the value of applications had exceeded £3M. The Police and Crime Panel priorities highlight report covered progress made against the Police and Crime Commissioner's six policies. It was suggested that, in light of the HMIC report, it might now be time to refresh the plan in order to show renewed focus on child protection issues. Other discussions had centred around the mounted Police trial; the cost of the four horses in the trial was £204,000 and a full evaluation was currently being carried out in respect of the added value of a mounted capability. It was noted that the next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel was due to be held on 8 September 2017.
- 21.5 A Member expressed concern at the disconnect between the HMIC report in respect of child protection and the fact that a Detective Sergeant had been awarded the Queen's Police Medal for his work in protecting children in Gloucestershire. In response, Councillor Garnham explained that the HMIC report had stated that liaison with other partners in the county tended to be at Superintendent level and there was a lack of awareness at a higher level beyond that. Whilst there was a lack of strategic leadership, in terms of the work carried out by Detective Sergeant Hatten, the award for the individual was justified. A Member noted that Gloucestershire County Council had come up with a plan in response to the inspection of its children's services and he questioned whether Gloucestershire Constabulary had presented a similar plan to the Police and Crime Panel. Councillor Garnham reiterated the requirement for the Constabulary to produce a report for HMIC within six weeks; that report would now have been produced and the Panel had asked to see it. Work was required in relation to a whole host of issues from child custody to safeguarding and missing children. The Police and Crime Commissioner had stated that there would be vast improvements within the next three months and there had been several changes at top level – including a new Chief Constable – so it would not be fair to assume leadership continued to be poor and he felt that it was important to wait and see what proposals were made in terms of improvement.
- 21.6 A Member indicated that he had made contact with Phil Sullivan, a retired Superintendent from Stroud District who was now a consultant that liaised with the Police. They had discussed the Neighbourhood Watch at length and he had undertaken to try to “shore-up” the local safety groups. Councillor Garnham explained that the Police and Crime Commissioner had made neighbourhood policing a priority and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner was leading a project to re-establish the Neighbourhood Watch countywide, recognising its previous shortcomings and the need to re-vamp neighbourhood policing more generally. Unfortunately, it was common across the country that those resources tended to be diverted to response policing so there were certainly challenges to

overcome in this area.

- 21.7 The Chair thanked the Council's representative for his presentation and indicated that the update would be circulated to Members via email following the meeting. It was

RESOLVED That the feedback from the last meeting of the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel be **NOTED**.

OS.22 GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 22.1 Members received an update from Councillor Mrs J E Day, the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on matters discussed at its last meeting held on 11 July 2017.

- 22.2 Councillor Day advised that the Committee had received a presentation demonstrating the outcomes of the 12 week engagement exercise in respect of the Gloucestershire Sustainability and Transformation Plan. Feedback from the general public had included approval of focus on prevention and self-care; difficulties navigating a complex system; importance of treating the whole person; and better use of technology. The Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group was now developing service change proposals for consultation with partners. These were required to go through the NHS England assurance process and would be received by the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course. There was a view that the number of responses – 638 completed surveys – was relatively small and it was suggested that this related to the lack of detail in the Sustainability and Transformation Plan. The expectation that there would be a significant increase in responses once the proposals for change were put out to consultation was acknowledged. It was hoped that the consultation process would begin later in the year. It was also recognised that, in a rural county, it would always be a challenge to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders were engaged, but the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group was of the view that the engagement activity did cut across all parts of the county. Members had remained frustrated by the lack of detail in the plan and the time taken to bring forward the proposals relating to urgent care centres and the Forest of Dean.

- 22.3 The Committee had engaged in a detailed debate with the Director of Adult Social Services on the lessons learnt in relation to Cleeve Link. Members had agreed that the way in which members of staff and Cleeve Link carers had responded to this situation was to be commended, particularly the carers who had gone into work despite no longer being employed by the organisation. The report had described in detail the lessons learnt and there remained a shared view and concern that signs were missed. Assurance was provided that the Commercial Services Team did have the necessary level of expertise in procurement and contract management, and that the Finance Team had the necessary skill base; notwithstanding this, confirmation was provided that additional expertise would be brought in if the situation required it. There was deep concern that Gloucestershire County Council was unaware of how unmanageable staff rotas were until the collapse of the company; this was a significant learning point for the Council which should be taken forward in terms of future contracts.

- 22.4 Councillor Day advised that the Care Quality Commission follow-up inspection of Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust had taken place and the Trust remained rated as 'requires improvement'. The Committee would consider the report at its Care Quality Commission workshop. Members remained concerned with regard to the situation with the Minor Injury and Illness Units in the Stroud

area, with a significant issue being workforce resilience. It was important that this was monitored by the Committee, particularly as the proposals relating to urgent care centres were unknown at present.

22.5 A Member raised concern regarding the construction problem at Tewkesbury Community Hospital which meant that people were being sent to other medical centres. He questioned whether there was any indication as to what had gone wrong and how long it would take to rectify. Councillor Day indicated that this had not been discussed at the meeting but she shared those concerns. Another Member noted that Vale Community Hospital and North Cotswold Hospital had been constructed under the same plan as Tewkesbury Community Hospital and he questioned whether similar problems could be expected with those buildings. Councillor Day undertook to raise these points with the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

22.6 The Chair thanked the Council's representative for her update and indicated that it would be circulated to Members following the meeting. It was

RESOLVED That the feedback from the last meeting of the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee be **NOTED**.

OS.23 PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT

23.1 The Chair introduced Sarah Scott, Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council, and indicated that she would be giving a presentation on the annual public health report.

23.2 The Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council indicated that she had been in post for 18 months and had worked as a consultant prior to that. Whilst the requirement was to produce an annual public health report, this had fallen behind and the report she would be presenting was a two year report covering the period 2014/15 – 2015/16. The 2016/17 report was currently being produced and she would be happy to bring this to the Committee when it was ready in the autumn. She explained that a slightly different approach had been taken to producing this report in terms of the way that the relevant information was presented to the public and stakeholders, for example, short films had been used in order to try to describe the impact of interventions which had been funded through public health.

23.3 The report contained a snapshot of health and wellbeing in the county using information from the Inform Gloucestershire website which combined the information held on the Multi-Agency Information Database for Neighbourhoods (MAIDeN), and Inform to provide district profiles. Gloucestershire was predominantly healthy and wealthy with a good quality of life and above average life expectancy. It did have an ageing population, with people tending to leave the county in their early twenties and return in their forties, and one of the key challenges was how the healthcare system could best be used to reflect the needs of that population. It was 19 years since the teenage pregnancy reduction targets had been set and Gloucestershire was a national leader in this area. Notwithstanding this, men living in the most deprived parts of the county could expect to live eight years less than men in the least deprived areas with the gap for women being six years; it felt particularly unjust that, in 2017, men and women were dying earlier just because of where they lived.

23.4 The public health ring-fenced grant for 2015/16 was £24,934,000; £4,178,000 had been spent on sexual health; £3,521,000 on healthy lifestyles e.g. stop smoking, weight management service on GP referral, breastfeeding peer support; £6,924,000 on commissioning the drug and alcohol treatment service; £507,000 on public mental health; £200,000 on domestic abuse; £5,225,000 on children aged 0-

19 e.g. school nursing service, specific activities in children's centres such as Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young (HENRY); £812,000 on NHS Health checks; and £3,549,000 on the public health function which paid for the Public Health Team, additional staff based in other teams, health protection contingency, and data storage and licences. A compulsory spending review in 2015 had reduced the ring-fenced grant and there was a further £1.2M reduction to make.

- 23.5 Attention was drawn to six case studies which showed how the public health grant had supported people in Gloucestershire. Members were shown a video in relation to former Type 2 diabetes sufferer Terry who had been able to turn his life around following a 12 week referral to Slimming World. Other examples included Play Gloucestershire which delivered local play projects such as the Play Rangers who took skills and equipment into the community to create safe places for outdoor play; the Recovery Hub Café which provided volunteering opportunities to help those recovering from addiction to gain confidence and experience in the workplace, as well as helping them to make friends and widen their support network, increasing their chances of long-term recovery; Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) which helped people to have a constructive conversation with someone who may be thinking about suicide; Fair Shares, a community project that used two way volunteering called time banking to bring people closer together to support and help one another; and Know Yer Balls, an initiative developed in partnership with Cheltenham Town Football Club which was a gender sensitive approach to health work with young men through football delivered at schools across the county. In terms of the current year, priorities included maximising the potential of the local Sustainability and Transformation Plan which had a strong prevention element; influencing other organisations to take on public health; and taking part in the pilot for tackling obesity for which Gloucestershire had been chosen as one of four local authorities.

- 23.6 A Member questioned how the £1.2M savings would be made. The Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council advised that work had been ongoing since November 2015 to understand how that would be achieved. In terms of the drugs and alcohol service, Change Grow Live (CGL) had been commissioned as the new provider in January 2017. Remodelling also helped with efficiencies, for example, aspects of healthy lifestyles had been remodelled and rolled into one service. Inevitably, some initiatives had been stopped and staff had been lost. The focus needed to be on the areas where funding could have the greatest impact. A Member understood that Officers had been finding it difficult to make contact with CGL and he raised concern that this might extend to those who needed to make use of the service. The Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council advised that CGL had a website and telephone number; the Public Health Team had been out to all localities, as had CGL and she could only apologise if there had not been any contact with Tewkesbury Borough Council. She indicated that she would be more than happy to speak to the relevant Officer following the meeting. She went on to provide assurance that, whilst CGL was a new provider, it offered the same service as the previous provider, Turning Point, the only difference being that there was no longer a hub in Tewkesbury; there had been low attendance at the hub and consultation with the

community had shown that people with drug and alcohol issues would prefer to meet in a place of their choosing. There were still hubs in Cheltenham, Gloucester and Stroud for anyone who did want to use them.

- 23.7 The Chair thanked the Director of Public Health for Gloucestershire County Council for her informative presentation and expressed the view that the videos of the case

studies were a very good way to communicate key messages to the public. It was

RESOLVED

1. That the presentation on the Public Health Report 2014/15 – 2015/16 be **NOTED**.
2. That the Public Health Report 2016/17 be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October/November.

OS.24 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REVIEW

24.1 The Chair welcomed Annette Roberts, Head of Development Services, to the meeting and indicated that she would be giving an update on the review of the planning service.

24.2 Members received a presentation which covered the following key points:

- Planning Service Review – Three strands: Planning Advisory Service (PAS) data capture – national benchmarking and data sets to see how the Council was doing and compare with other similar authorities; procedure review and analysis i.e. why were things done in the way they were and what could be done to improve them; and customer service improvements e.g. answering the telephone within a certain number of rings, making it easier for customers who did not use the planning service on a regular basis.
 - Principles Behind the Review – Delivery of service in a resilient manner; maximise best use of resources; improve procedures; retain and attract quality staff; drive improvements to service; best planning service; deliver growth ambitions; and offer a customer orientated service.
 - Data Collection Information – Report - cost, income, productivity and performance; benchmarking; analysis, opportunity identification; and change and improvement work.
 - Procedure Review and Enhancement – Critically looking at the Development Management Service end to end; interviewing/discussing the service with Officers to gain their perspective; identifying key areas that may need further investigation e.g. pre-application, validation, application assessment, decision-making including conditions and Section 106; suggesting approaches to service improvement, identifying other relevant good practice or templates where appropriate; and identifying areas where service sharing, joint working and/or a consistent approach to service standards would, or may, be beneficial for the service/s and customers.
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- Customer Service – Telephone calls capture exercise i.e. how many do we get, what type of enquiries; research into IT in Planning Awards; benchmark quality service based on IT systems; feedback forms – create feedback forms to be sent out with decision notices; create a Tewkesbury Borough Council 'Apply for Planning' factsheet; create a standard signature for all pre-application responses; forms/prompt sheets for duty planning appointments; publish planning information i.e. number of houses approved, number of planning applications dealt with etc.; enforcement plan – to help the public understand

how it was dealt with and the procedures that were followed; planning interactive map to enable customers to self-serve; Parish briefings on applications; planning forums.

- Next Steps – First draft of PAS work received today; reports on key strands of work expected early summer; provide information to joint and independent reviews; implement service improvement towards end of year (“quick wins” would be implemented straight away); Member forums and agent/architect forums in the autumn.

- 24.3 A Member expressed the view that Parish Councils needed more assistance and training and this was echoed by several other Members of the Committee. The Head of Development Services advised that she had been to see a number of Parish Councils in relation to specific applications but she agreed that a more formal approach was needed in terms of how they dealt with applications and their relationship with the Planning Team. Parish Council involvement was particularly important in relation to Section 106 contributions as they understood the wants and needs of their communities. Linked to this, another Member felt that there was a misconception among the public that Parish Councils were responsible for determining planning applications. The Head of Development Services recognised that this had been a problem in the past and it was important that both applicants, and neighbours, understood how the process worked. This could be achieved through putting information on the website and including links to that within neighbour notification letters. A Member raised concern that the method which allowed Councillors to track a particular application had been changed and he felt this should have been communicated to Members prior to implementation. The Head of Development Services indicated that she was unaware of this situation but she undertook to look into it following the meeting.
- 24.4 A Member questioned whether the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would have any input into the potential changes to the planning service and the Head of Development Services confirmed that the service improvement plans would be brought to the Committee. She was keen to obtain input from all Members and intended to set up a separate briefing session as well as consulting with the Planning Committee. The Member felt that it was important for target dates to be attributed to the various actions arising from the review and he was assured that there was an action plan in place for each of the three strands of the review; this was a dynamic document that could be added to as new ideas arose and the Head of Development Services indicated that she would be very happy to share this at the appropriate time.
- 24.5 Several Members raised concern regarding customer service and it was suggested that it might be beneficial to employ Officers with skills in this particular area. Members were informed that more interviews would be taking place over the next couple of months and the department would shortly be up to full complement. The Council had previously employed a Duty Planning Officer who worked from a dedicated planning reception and this was an option that could be considered during the review. It was noted that there would be a need to look at this in relation to the Growth Hub. In terms of moving forward with existing staff, the Head of Development Services recognised that there had been an issue historically with answering the telephone and responding to customers; this required a cultural change which she was keen to see implemented as swiftly as possible. If there were any specific incidents which Members had concerns about then she asked to be made aware of them so she could ensure they were addressed. A Member expressed the opinion that, to achieve the goal of attracting and retaining quality staff, the Council would need to offer more attractive packages in order to compete with the private sector. He pointed out that a number of experienced Officers who had started their careers with the authority at a junior level had recently left to work in the private sector so retention was a particular concern.

- 24.6 The Chair thanked the Head of Development Services for her update and indicated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's role was to act as a critical friend and Members were keen to support the review in order to drive forward improvement. It was

RESOLVED That the update in respect of the review of the planning service be **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 6:10 pm